

the generational cycles of welfare dependence. The American people elected us to do the very thing we are now trying to do.

They asked us to return control of their lives and their government to local communities.

They asked us to spend their money wisely.

They asked us to create a system of mutual responsibility in which welfare recipients would be granted aid but would be required to contribute something back to society for assistance given.

They asked us to change incentives, and create a welfare system that promotes work, that reduces illegitimacy, that strengthens families, and that provides an opportunity for all Americans to succeed.

Mr. President, I believe the Dole substitute amendment, No. 2280, goes a long way toward doing what the American people have asked us to do.

It consolidates AFDC cash benefits, JOBS, and related child care programs into a capped block grant to States and gives States a large degree of flexibility to address their unique problems. The Dole substitute also requires a 30-percent reduction in Federal staff currently administering AFDC and the JOBS Program. By consolidating programs, we can reduce the costs of bureaucracy and get the money to our children.

The Dole substitute requires able-bodied adult welfare recipients to work. Welfare recipients will no longer be able to avoid work by moving from one job training program to the next. They must begin work no later than 2 years after getting on the rolls and cannot receive benefits for more than 5 years.

Finally, it contains several provisions designed to strengthen families and require personal responsibility. States can deny cash payments to teenage mothers and place family caps on cash assistance. Single teen parents must stay in school and live under adult supervision. And deadbeat parents will face financial penalties and tough sanctions, including the loss of drivers and professional licenses.

Mr. President, a number of amendments will be offered this week which can strengthen the Dole substitute.

For example, I believe a welfare bill should include a pay-for-performance work requirement, so that there is a proportional reduction in benefits for work missed by a welfare recipient—no work, no benefits.

I would support an amendment to reward Governors for their efforts in reducing illegitimacy rates within their States.

And we should strengthen the requirements that unwed mothers establish the paternity of their children in order to get benefits.

Mr. President, we have a chance to make history here this week. We have the opportunity to regroup, to restructure, and to find new ways of helping those in need.

Those of us who are committed to change have behind us the full force of the American people. Those who argue against those changes have nothing on their side but the dismal history of the past 30 years.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRIST). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DASCHLE. I wish the Presiding Officer a good morning. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

FARM BILL

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, every 5 years, Congress has the opportunity to review the Government's role in sustaining domestic agriculture production and determine the effectiveness of those programs. That effort is underway as we begin, again this year, the legislation that modifies and extends USDA programs. The multiyear farm bill allows us to step back and shine the light on current conditions on each and every one of the programs affected by this legislation.

As the Senate Agriculture Committee took its first look under the hood earlier last month, it is already clear that some of the programs need a tune-up, some need a complete overhaul, and still others may need to be hauled away.

No piece of legislation Congress takes up this year will affect the lives of South Dakotans and rural Americans more than the 1995 farm bill. Commodity support programs, trade, conservation, research, domestic food assistance, rural credit, and the rural development programs will all be under very close scrutiny.

In my years in Congress, I have had the honor of representing the interests and concerns of South Dakota farmers and ranchers in a number of these farm bill debates. In close consultation with the agricultural community, I have worked to improve farm income and bolster the rural economy by offering amendments that were eventually incorporated in the final legislation.

Nonetheless, as each of these bills have come up for final votes, I have had to ask myself whether they truly represented our best effort to respond to legitimate needs of the agricultural sector. I sincerely hope this year, as we begin to weigh pros and cons of the legislation, that we recognize that the stakes could not be higher.

As we debate the 1995 farm bill in the coming months, I hope the Democrats

and Republicans alike can move beyond the partisanship that so often dominates Congress and work together to draft a farm bill that truly reflects the genuine appreciation for an agricultural community that is too often taken for granted. On many issues, I am optimistic that broad consensus is possible and, indeed, likely. As in years past, however, there are those in Congress who will push for drastic and disproportionate cuts in agricultural spending, claiming that in these times of tight budget constraints, we can no longer afford to support American agriculture, including family farmers.

I say we cannot afford to. American agriculture is making an extraordinarily important contribution to the national economy. In a time when our manufacturing base continues to decline, agriculture contributes more to our exports and produces one of the largest positive balances of trade of any sector within our economy.

Let me remind my colleagues of the extent to which the agriculture sector has already contributed significantly to deficit reduction in the last several years. Since 1986, agriculture spending has been cut by 60 percent, from \$26 to \$9 billion today. If other Federal programs had been slashed as severely as agriculture over the last 10 years, the U.S. Government would now have a budget surplus.

Such past contributions will not and should not preclude the Federal agricultural programs from being thoroughly reviewed once again. The farmers I talked to realize and accept this proposition. They are as concerned about the Federal deficit as anyone. Amidst ever-increasing production costs and stagnant commodity prices, they know how difficult it is to balance a budget, but they do it in their daily lives and expect us to do it as well. Farmers and ranchers are willing to lend their hand to the effort. They simply ask that once a hand is extended, it receives a fair shake.

Our task is to ensure fairness and responsibility in drafting a new farm bill. Farm programs are like many other Government programs: They can be refined; they can be streamlined. Their costs can be reduced and their effectiveness can be increased.

All agricultural policy initiatives must be crafted with the intelligence and with the simultaneous appreciation for the role that family farmers play in the daily lives of all Americans and the budgetary constraints in which we now find ourselves.

We must not, however, let those woefully ignorant of farming realities run roughshod over sound agricultural policy under the guise of fiscal responsibility. Farmers across the country know the difference between political expedience and fiscal responsibility, even if we in Congress confuse the two.

Fashioning a farm bill that will reduce the cost and still provide the necessary services and support for agriculture is one of the top priorities in

this session of Congress. I have four primary goals as we look at the upcoming farm bill.

First, we need to increase the market income of family farmers. Farmers are the backbone of rural America and an essential part of the foundation of our entire economy. The new farm bill should be structured to maximize net farm income and reduce reliance on Government payments.

Farmers tell me time and time again that they want to receive more income from the market and less from the Government. The income support programs in the farm bill must give farmers the flexibility to respond to market conditions while still providing an economic safety net. I am firmly convinced the market can and should more fairly compensate farmers for the long hours and large amounts of capital they invest in producing our food.

Second, we need to promote the production of innovative value-added agricultural products that will expand the markets for American agriculture and enhance the incomes of all of our producers. USDA research dollars should be targeted toward the expansion of these market opportunities.

The American farmer is the most productive in the world, but production in and of itself does not pay the bills. We need to facilitate the creation of new markets in which agricultural products can actually be sold. This will stimulate our small communities by bringing new industries to rural areas and improving the economic stability of all family farmers.

Third, we need to drastically simplify Federal programs. I have had the opportunity to work in a South Dakota county ASCS office and see the excessive paperwork and redtape. Any of us would get hopelessly lost in the maze of base acres, deficiency payments, marketing loans, payment acres, program crops, nonprogram crops, and target prices that producers must navigate each and every day. These programs cry out for reform and simplification. Most farmers will tell you that if we could do any one of them a favor, this would be it. Let us allow farmers to get back to doing what they do best: Growing safe and abundant food.

Finally, we need to find innovative ways to assist young and beginning farmers. The future of rural communities is really in their hands. Far too many young South Dakotans are forced to leave our State every year in search of opportunities in urban areas. Loans, assistance programs and, most of all, a good price are needed to encourage young people to begin farming. We are almost unanimous in support of this goal, but the challenge here is perhaps greater than anywhere else, given the severe budget restrictions we face over the next few years. I hope we can find the creativity necessary to meet this particular challenge.

In the context of the extensive cuts the current budget resolution will in-

flict upon rural America, our actions on the farm bill are magnified in importance. We simply cannot let the farm bill deteriorate into a political squabble between parties or, for that matter, regions. If that happens, everybody will be busy scoring political points, and the only real loser will be agriculture. It is time we stopped taking our safe and abundant food supply, and the farmers and ranchers who produce it, for granted. We must use this opportunity to craft a farm bill that reflects the need to preserve rural America and the farms that produce the world's safest and most abundant food supply.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY ACT

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. SIMPSON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, briefly, because I know we are ready to move on with this legislation, I certainly want to speak in support of the Work Opportunity Act of 1995. That bill which my fine colleagues, Majority Leader DOLE and Senator PACKWOOD, have placed before us represents, I think, a very good starting point for welfare reform. I commend both of them for their work and for working with all of us to ensure that our concerns were taken care of.

It is not a perfect bill. A bill rarely is. But it surely puts us on the right track. They have listened to my suggestions, especially with regard to recognition of rural areas and amending the bill to include vocational training and the definition of work. That is a provision Wyoming needed in the bill, and now under the bill, recipients can receive vocational training for up to a year. I appreciate that very much. That was very attentive to our needs.

I strongly felt that welfare reform should be a high priority. I think we all agree with that. There is much to do. Not only to "get tough" with those who might best be described as welfare addicts, which offend us all, but also to help those who truly want to become self-sufficient, which charms us all, and know that these people need our attention.

So, if we can do this in a humane and responsible manner—there is not one among us who has a desire to be punitive or destructive to any of those who are disadvantaged and most vulnerable in society. I do not see that. That is an absurd premise.

When we talk about welfare reform, it is important that we look at the big picture and understand the reasons why people are on welfare. It is a very difficult thing. Those who have studied it for decades are unable to really come to closure on how these things happen, why is this occurring, why is the birth rate here, and what is the rate of illegitimacy? Nobody has done more work

in that area than the senior Senator from New York. We read his studies, his works, and appreciate his extraordinary range of and grasp of the issue. It is a giant puzzler for us.

In Wyoming, I know a single parent will tell me that they could get by without welfare if they just received the child support they were supposed to get in the divorce. I know about that because I did about 1,500 of those in my practice of law for 18 years. "If he would pay the child support, I would not need to be on welfare." That is very true. I have often felt we should put teeth in the welfare and child support enforcement laws. I applaud the leadership for including serious child support provisions in this bill. I am particularly pleased by the provisions that improve our ability to track down absent parents and streamline the process to make interstate enforcement less complicated and unmanageable. This is what has happened for years. You get the decree and support order, and the husband takes off. This will inject some responsibility in here for a group in society known as "fathers" who are not here on Earth simply to sire the flock and move on, and that has to stop.

Paternity establishment is another high priority in the legislation, and we are addressing that. I appreciate the approach in regard to block granting. Our very able Governor, Jim Geringer, a very able administrator, tells us that they need and require flexibility. We want to give that flexibility in the form of block grants so States can shape their own programs, make themselves laboratories. I am one who just does not believe that the Federal Government, or we here, have a monopoly on compassion. I do not see how people can even imagine that State officials somehow care any less about families and children than the Feds do. I think that these programs and flexibility are very important.

I also agree with Senators PACKWOOD and CHAFEE in their approach to the child welfare provisions included in the bill by not putting child welfare and child protection into block grants. They have recognized that we should not be too hasty in turning everything over to the States at one time.

There is a consensus here among child welfare administrators that Federal protections have led to new improvements to this system and critical incentives to the State. It was true in my State where the system was in complete chaos until the State had guidelines and requirements to follow for receiving the Federal funding. Only then did Wyoming develop a child protection and foster care program that takes care of its most vulnerable and neglected children. In fact, were it not for the standards that Congress enacted—and I know this is strong language for a Republican, but in this situation, were it not for the standards Congress enacted in 1980, the States and territories with the worst track